



Minutes of the Newtown Residents' Association meeting - 18 March 2024

Present: Rhona Carson (Chair), Steve Cosgrove (Minutes), Kayte Fairfax, Kim Young, Hilary Watson, David Jenkins, Tom Law, Kevin Lethbridge, Violetta Manetto Quick, Jacob Jolley, Steve Dunn, Cheryl Robilliard, Sean Broadley, Marion Leighton, Sam Somers, Michelle Wolland, Penny Sturgess, Don McDonald, Joyce Gibson, Nina Goguel. Guest- Alex Hockley, CEO WHF Trust.

Apologies: DM Laurie Foon, Jane Patterson, Carol Comber, Lainey Cowan. Also Cr Nureddin Abdurahman, Adam Awad - both apologised due to Ramadan obligations.

Rhona welcomed new people to the meeting, and welcomed Alex Hockley – present to discuss the Wellington Heritage Festival, and also a Newtown Resident.

Rhona made a list of topics that people wanted to discuss.

District Plan

There was a general discussion about the changes.

- Rhona outlined the process to happen next. The recommendations of the Independent Hearings Panel with regard to character precincts and the City Centre Boundary were rejected by a majority of WCC Councillors, who passed amendments to revert to the boundary and precincts which were in the Proposed District Plan. This has the effect of allowing 6 storey developments over most of residential Newtown - the outcome we have been trying to avoid since the Spatial Plan was first mooted. The next and final step is that Chris Bishop, as the responsible Government Minister, will decide whether to accept the WCC recommendations or to endorse the IHP recommendations. We don't know the timeframe for this.
- There was a brief recap of the preferred Newtown Housing proposal for intensification, mostly in the suburban centre.
- Sam noted that an Onslow group is planning to lobby Chris Bishop to remove the rapid transit designation on the Johnsonville train line.
- The meeting expressed doubt that the changes will result in low cost housing.
- There was a general discussion about specific buildings and the history of the area.

Local Government Official Information Act

Don McDonald expressed concern about lack of response to his request for information about parking non compliance, fines, records of accidents and related issues.

Road Safety

Kayte (from Roy St) pointed out the lack of pedestrian crossings in Newtown. There is particular concern about the safety of children in the area. The meeting agreed to look at following up this issue.

Water Leaks

Wellington South Community Patrol recently counted 36 leaks. Tom Law outlined some examples.

Oral Submission on Newtown Parking Plan

Steve Cosgrove will be speaking on 20th March, on behalf of the Association - he asked for input about important points. Eg Roy St and other examples of the need for community based planning - as specified in the Parking Policy.

We've heard there is a proposal from Hospital staff to delay the commencement of the plan - Marion commented that the Hospital won't be any closer in two years.

Festival Feedback

There was strong support and thanks for everyone, particularly Marion and others who were instrumental in providing an excellent morning tea for official guests.

Kayte commented on the Chief Children's Commissioner being at the Festival. Rhona noted that people from the Children's Commission Office had a base in the children's activity area in the St Anne's grounds, to engage mokopuna on the question 'What Matters Most To You?'. Kayte volunteered to follow up on the outcome of this.

Wellington Heritage Festival

Alex Hockley, CEO of the Wellington Heritage Festival Trust, outlined plans for this festival, noting that there is more time this year - from Saturday 26th October until Sunday 17th November.

Anyone interested in contributing to the event should contact the organisers.

Examples include walking tours, static talks, open buildings etc.

Telling stories inside the buildings they apply to will add to the making the story more compelling.

Expressions of interest are required by the end of April.

Rhona volunteered to contact Newtown Community Centre, Newtown School and the Zoo, to see if other organisations are thinking of participating, and/or have ideas to suggest.

Green Street and Emmett Street

There is a suggestion to apply to designate these streets an historic area if the current owners are willing.

Loafers Lodge

It is close to the first anniversary of the tragic fire there. Penny is enquiring whether the City Mission or others have plans for acknowledging the Anniversary.

Meeting ended at 9:11